

FEMA Seeks Public Comment on Proposed Changes to Increase Funding Access, Reduce Disaster Risk for Vulnerable Communities

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WASHINGTON -- FEMA has published a notice in the [Federal Register](#) seeking comment on how to apply new legislation that will designate areas where communities are most at risk to natural hazards.

This notice will help the agency gain better understanding in key areas to support an effective implementation of the [Community Disaster Resilience Zones Act](#). This includes learning how communities identify, use and apply risk assessment tools to reduce natural hazard effects and how to achieve equity and geographic balance when designating zones.

The Community Disaster Resilience Zone Act amends the [Robert T. Stafford Disaster Recovery and Emergency Act](#) to use FEMA's [National Risk Index](#) to designate community disaster zones. These represent areas with the highest natural hazard risk and a relatively lower ability to withstand their impacts.

“As our nation continues to grapple with the impacts of climate change and the rising frequency of extreme weather events, it is imperative that we help equip the most vulnerable and disadvantaged communities to face these challenges head-on,” said FEMA’s Assistant Administrator of Grants Pam Williams. “The designated zones can help FEMA, other federal agencies and our public and private partners prioritize resources and assistance to help build a culture of resilience by fostering partnerships and leveraging expertise. Together, we will build stronger, more resilient communities capable of weathering any storm.”

Vulnerable communities often face difficulties in accessing disaster resilience funding. These communities will receive targeted support to access federal funding to plan for resilience projects that will help them reduce impacts caused by



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climate change and natural hazards.

Targeted federal support includes increased federal cost-share for the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities program, lessening the financial burden on communities to perform resilience-related activities. This includes a greater federal [cost share](#) adjustment and an increase in the community's ability to afford valuable pre-disaster mitigation projects.

The law will also enable communities to work across a range of federal and private sector partners to maximize funding and provide technical assistance, strengthening community resilience.

Comments can be submitted from 2023-11268 on the [Federal eRulemaking Portal](#), Docket ID: FEMA-2023-0009 or by emailing FEMA-CDRZ-RFI@fema.dhs.gov. Please follow the instructions on the page for submitting comments and contact the [Regulations.gov Help Desk](#) if you have technical issues.

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